

Message Text

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ACTION ARA-14

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 L-03 SCA-01 VO-03 OPR-02 FSI-04
/028 W

-----103189 292016Z /73

R 291700Z AUG 77
FM AMEMBASSY NASSAU
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 9745
INFO AMEMBASSY PORT AU PRINCE
INS WASH DC

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E.O. 11652: N/A
TAGS: PINT SOCI SEDU BF
SUBJ: REQUEST BY BAHAMIAN IMMIGRATION DEPARTMENT - CREOLE
INSTRUCTION

1. BARBARA PIERRE, DIRECTOR OF BAHAMIAN IMMIGRATION, AND
SISTER OF DEPUTY PRIME MINISTER ARTHUR HANNA, CALLED AT
EMBASSY MORNING AUGUST 29 TO REQUEST OUR ASSISTANCE. ACCORDING
TO MRS. PIERRE, BAHAMAS EXPERIENCING INCREASING PROBLEM
WITH INFLUX OF HAITIANS ENTERING ISLANDS ILLEGALLY. STEPS
HAVE ALREADY BEEN ANNOUNCED TO COMBAT PROBLEM - I.E. CON-
STRUCTION OF A DETENTION CENTER IN NASSAU. AS PART OF OVERALL
PLAN, HOWEVER, BAHAMAS DEPARTMENT OF IMMIGRATION, DESPERATELY
NEEDS TO TRAIN ONE OF ITS EMPLOYEES AS AN INTERPRETOR-
TRANSLATOR OF CREOLE. (HER DEPARTMENT PRESENTLY RELYING ON
ASSISTANCE OF A HAITIAN PERMANENT RESIDENT IN BAHAMAS WHO
SHE HAS REASON TO DISTRUST.) A GRADE II IMMIGRATION OFFICER,
ANTHONY LEWIS, WHOSE MOTHER WAS HAITIAN AND WHO ALREADY
SPEAKS SOME CREOLE HAS BEEN SELECTED BY HER TO STUDY
THE LANGUAGE AT GCOB EXPENSE PERFERABLY IN PORT AU
PRINCE. MRS. PIERRE INQUIRED ABOUT THE POSSIBILTY OF
SOMEHOW "INFORMALLY ATTACHING LEWIS TO AMERICAN EMBASSY,
IN HAITI FOR A ONE MONTH PERIOD." IF THIS PROVED FEASIBLE,
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SHE STATED THAT SHE WOULD APPROACH CANADIANS WITH SAME
REQUEST. SHE HOPED, HOWEVER, THAT WE MIGHT BE ABLE TO
ASSIST ESPECIALLY IN LIGHT OF JOINT BAHAMIAN-U.S. EFFORTS
AND COOPERATION IN STEMMING FLOW OF ILLEGAL HAITIAN IMMIGRATION
TO BAHAMAS AND TO U.S.

2. I RESPONDED BY SAYING THAT WE WOULD VERY MUCH LIKE TO

ASSIST HER ON THIS MATTER BUT THAT I WAS UNSURE ABOUT
FEASIBILITY OF "ATTACHING" A BAHAMIAN NATIONAL TO OUR EMBASSY
IN HAITI. I SUGGESTED THAT ALTERNATIVELY LEWIS MIGHT POSSIBLY
BE ABLE TO STUDY CREOLE IN U.S. PERHAPS WITH HAITIAN
COMMUNITY IN MIAMI OR NEW YORK OR EVEN AT F.S.I. IN ANY
EVENT, I PROMISED TO CONSULT DEPARTMENT AND RESPOND TO HER
REQUEST AS SOON AS POSSIBLE.

3. ILLEGAL IMMIGRATION BY HAITIANS INTO BAHAMAS IS INDEED
A SERIOUS AND GROWING PROBLEM AND ONE WITH VERY REAL NEGATIVE
CONSEQUENCES TO THE LOCAL ECONOMY AND THE SCIO-ECONOMIC
INFRASTRUCTURE OF THIS COUNTRY WHOSE TOTAL POPULATION IS
ESTIMATED TO BE ONLY TWO HUNDRED THOUSAND. IN ADDITION,
BAHAMIAN OFFICIALS AT ALL LEVELS ARE BEING MORE AND MORE
COOPERATIVE WITH EMBASSY AND INS IN EXCHANGING INFORMATION
ON ILLEGAL HAITIANS TRANSITING BAHAMAS ENROUTE TO U.S.
FINALLY, AS DEPARTMENT IS AWARE, MRS. PIERRE IS A MOST
VALUABLE CONTACT OF THIS EMBASSY WHO WE HAVE ASSIDUOUSLY
CULTIVATED OVER PAST SEVERAL YEARS. SHE HAS DONE US
INNUMERABLE AND IMPORTANT FAVORS AND TO MY KNOWLEDGE THIS
IS FIRST TIME SHE HAS REQUESTED OUR ASSISTANCE. FOR ALL
THESE REASONS WE WOULD LIKE TO BE AS FORTHCOMING AS
POSSIBLE.

4. DEPARTMENT THEREFORE REQUESTED TO ASCERTAIN VIEWS OF
EMBASSY PORT AU PRINCE ON POSSIBILITY OF ATTACHING LEWIS
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TO EMBASSY THERE FOR A PERIOD OF ONE MONTH FOR PURPOSES
OF PERFECTING CREOLE. IF THIS PROVES UNFEASIBLE WE WOULD
APPRECIATE INFORMATION ON ANY ACCREDITED INSTITUTIONS
IN U.S. - INCLUDING F.S.I. - WHICH TEACH CONVERSATIONAL CREOLE
- TOGETHER WITH TUITION FEES, ETC.
TAYLOR

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Message Attributes

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Sent Date: 29-Aug-1977 12:00:00 am
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Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 22 May 2009
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
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